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- ART. III. — 1. EUSTATHII *Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem et Odysseam ad Fidem Exempli Romani. Cum Indice* DEVARII. 7 vols. in 4. 4to. Lipsiæ. 1825–30.
2. F. A. WOLF. *Prolegomena ad Homerum.* 8vo. Halis. 1795.
3. *Lectures on Ancient History.* By B. G. NIEBUHR. 3 vols. 8vo. London. 1852.

WHATEVER is remote from our accustomed modes of life seems to us unnatural, and, when at an extreme from us, unhuman. To the illiterate, the scholar is a strange being, and it requires little persuasion to convince the more ignorant that he works with supernatural agencies. Equally the scholar, if he keep himself apart from common forms of life, may often come to invest those forms with a poetic garb, and to see in the farmer ploughing a field something hardly more real and living than the same scene painted with Homer's golden words upon the shield of Achilles. This remoteness is the natural result of habits of seclusion and of the removal of sympathy, in large measure, from present and immediate surroundings to the past and to other scenes. So it follows that the busy world, esteeming those who are called scholars as practically divorced from humanity, because their eyes seem always turned backward into the shadowy past, regardless of the real forms moving before their bodily sense, does set apart all such as members of one great class. But this is rather a classification by exclusion, than one created by any mutual attraction through community of interests. The more we consider the members of this class, inquiring what they have sought and by what methods, we shall find, first, that they manifest an excessive individuality, arising from their solitary habits and from the subjects of their thought, — for all scholars have a Cyclopean element in their character, often strongly developed, leading them to sit on mountains apart, lawless and self-contained; and, secondly, when there is a tendency to combine, we shall find not one class, but several classes, into which they divide, — so that, whenever and wherever they exist, they may be gathered, according to their objects and

modes of study, to comrades in thought, and they will turn each to his own by natural impulse, separating from many in the same school—if we may so extend the word—those with whom they have affinity.

If the divisions into which scholars might be classified were to be carefully distinguished, they would, we think, be three in number, and they would be found successive in development; not necessarily in respect to the general history of the world to the present day, but, what is more important, in respect to the evolution of any single epoch, or the history of any single nation. Niebuhr and Arnold both have pointed out this distinction, while they showed the fallacy of the ordinary division into ancient and modern history, the latter being parallel to the former, rather than supplementary. Thus, while the several phases which scholarship has assumed have a logical succession, two of them may be synchronous, owing to the different degrees of advancement in two different nations at one time. But since the scholar, by the very nature of his work, draws nourishment for his life from sources beyond the political boundaries that circumscribe him, and thus gets the benefit of progress elsewhere when his own nation is stagnant, so it will be found that these phases of scholarship, upon the whole, have had, or are having, each its period in general history.

The first of these phases may be termed the curious; using that word, of course, in its active sense. It springs from the temper of mind in which a child approaches anything new or strange. In its researches, it rejects nothing; it simply makes collections, and derives a gratification from the abundance of its antique treasures, amassing hoards of classical facts and fancies for the very pleasure of the work. When it attempts classification, it is either on the most obvious differences and affinities, or by arbitrary and artificial laws. It is characteristic of this phase of scholarship that it is found in connection with the largest leisure. Its disciples seem to undertake their work as if they should have plenty of time to finish it, and so might plan as largely and as minutely as they chose. Thus, in the Middle Age, the most noticeable period of this class, they had fellowship with the disciples of art who built the cathedrals

and illuminated the missals. With magnificent designs they coupled rare patience, and plodded on and on, as if the world wagged lazily, and there were in the womb of the present no restless movement of a giant future. The very word *Scholiast* indicates the leisurely character of these scholars.

The creation which their labors called forth was of the most fanciful sort. In the old soil of Grecian and Roman life they planted fantastic flowers from their own period, grotesquely intermingled with the native growth. Just as Dutch gardeners dehumanize trees and shrubs by cutting them into human shapes, so they, in the gardens of ancient literature, would cut and trim in the oddest fashion all the forms of beauty which they found, in the effort to make them look like their own fantasies. To our modern perceptions there is something very comical in the sight of these grave men giving birth to such levity. We seem to see them, gray-bearded, and laden with years and wisdom, sitting in the sun, blowing bubbles, and watching them in their wayward flight till they vanish into thin air. How tedious to us are their fine-spun subtilties, followed with such pertinacity through all their windings. Such was, indeed, the natural result of an intellectual life swayed by superstition and disengaged from practical affairs; and there can be no doubt that the celibacy of scholars worked much toward this result, since they were thus cut off from just what would have most effectually humanized their intellect, bringing it down from the clouds to build its structures upon a more enduring basis.

The writings of that ponderous Archbishop, Eustathius, are a good example of this phase of scholarship, when in its dominant period. To our modern habits of reading and literary work, there is something appalling in the sight of the fat volumes that contain his commentaries on Homer; and these are but a part of his labors. That a man, an Archbishop too, who certainly ought to be very wise, should deliberately sit down to the collection of all the facts that may, by any possibility, be connected with Homer, is in itself a matter for contemplation. But when we begin to read, and discover the Archbishop in the act of discoursing on a line of the poet, we see how, at the rate he moves, he might easily fill very many more

volumes. We stand aghast at the interminable sentences which wind along in so tortuous a course. Listen to him as he commences, "Now, mark this!" and then goes on in chase of a word, hunting it through all the cases, calling in the assistance of its congeners, cornering it in Euripides, losing it again, and then unearthing it in some grammarian; and after it is fairly on its back, happening to think of the matter of the passage in which it occurs, with another "Just notice this, now," he is off again upon the track of some mythologic scamp, or perhaps, worse still, holds up his forefinger to admonish one of the excellent sense contained in the sentiment, and with most laborious effort explains some thought clear as crystal in Homer, but likely to be muddy enough after Eustathius has been splashing his magisterial stick in it. He treats his readers — supposing him to care anything about them — as if they were, one and all, utterly stupid, and his author as if he were utterly incomprehensible. But if one has only the patience to examine him in spots, and understands the art of judicious skipping, he will give many thanks in the end to Eustathius, and will pardon him his tediousness in consideration of his industry. It is hard work indeed to select from his mass the really valuable portions; for he is like an ill-educated chiffonnier knocking about among old pottery, and by some bungling fortune lighting upon treasures worth finding, but for himself he has so little knowledge of the value of things that a Pompeian vase and a pitcher fresh from the wheel seem of equal worth.

This race of scholars has not wholly passed away. There are now, and ever will be, men with the same simple objective interest in matters of antiquity. The world looks with a kind of pity, not unmingled with contempt, upon them, as they browse in our libraries, busy on endless nothings, — arriving at small conclusions upon the most important subjects, and expressing weighty opinions upon the most trivial matters, hunting quotations with the vigilance of a professional detective through all the turnings of literature, and never so happy as when they can discover some oversight or blunder. They live in all libraries, and may be found poised before the bookseller's table. In the street they are *de trop*, but they

never know it, appearing utterly unconscious of the bustle about them. Their very dress is whimsical, not affected, denoting the remoteness of their life from the sterility, as they would think it, of the present. Such a man was George Dyer, whom Lamb has so affectionately quizzed.

But though this phase of scholarship is quaint now, in its dominant period it was natural and fitting. It is not the highest development, but it is of inestimable importance. The work which such scholars have done so cheerfully was essential to subsequent stages of learning. They made the collections for the great classical museum, and if they are ill-assorted, still it was of prime importance that the objects should be there. Thus Eustathius is to-day the great *thesaurus* for Homeric scholars. So, too, the labors of more recent scholars, who have wrought in the same spirit, are always of avail; nor can we, even if we hold such work in light esteem, help admitting the spirit in which it is effected to be at once cheerful and healthy. We are apt to think it childish, because it is so often amusingly *naïve*, and its possessors so unworldly-wise; but many in our own day would sigh after just such a spirit.

But this phase in its historic aspect was but preparing the way for one of higher importance. To a considerable extent curiosity had been satisfied, and a further development of scholarship assumed a *critical* phase. It is impossible that the mind should always or long content itself with an interest in the mere objects of antiquity; or that, beginning to inquire into them, it should stop at a mere fanciful playing with them, or at an arrangement according to the most apparent characteristics. The intellect, indeed, during the foregoing period, was so far swayed by reverence, and by superstition, its counterfeit, that the attitude of the scholar toward antiquity was that of wondering docility, accepting all things, and resting in them as the end. But with the reaction from this temper — the intellect being disenthralled — came a cold control over thought. Everything must be arraigned before reason, whose decisions are final. The disposition increases to take antiquity not for what it is in itself, but for what service it may render. There is a departure from the old, self-forgetting interest in

the object, and a growing tendency to look at everything subjectively. And the more this right of the intellect to sit in judgment is allowed, the more will it be exercised. Nothing is more insidiously tempting to the mind than the revelation of its power. The flattery to one's mental power in the conscious ability to find fault or to praise with discrimination is so sweet and so subtle, that the force of the mind is more and more turned in this direction. It is the pride which whispers the fatal words, "Ye shall be as gods," that works the destruction of simple wisdom, and builds in its place an arrogant science which measures everything by rod and plummet.

It is plain how apparently infinite would be the scope allowed to the energy of the mind set in this direction. Already there exists for it a mine of wealth in the unclassified, confused heaps gathered by the representatives of the curious phase of scholarship. This is the old curiosity-shop which is to be transformed into a scientifically arranged museum; and, indeed, it would appear as if the whole ancient world had been labelled and catalogued by the workers in this spirit. So it is that, with this wide scope for its energy, the reason has achieved elsewhere no victories greater than in the field of classical erudition. Critical scholarship has carried certain subjects to a length which few ordinary scholars care to follow. An exhaustive process has been applied to literature, which bewilders one who seeks to secure the results. Out of heel-bones and finger-joints these classical anatomists have reconstructed the products of pre-historic periods, and traced, step by step, the formation of language and the progress of the arts. And for mere quantity of work, the world has never seen more prolific results of study than have appeared, especially in Germany, during the last hundred years which we assume to be the dominant period of this phase of scholarship.

The ambition of minds working in this way has been to reach the end of their subjects. In two directions has this mastering purpose driven them. It has urged them laterally, carrying them over wide fields of research in quest of all that relates to their subject, and it has urged them forward, leading them with untiring perseverance to pursue it to its full and ultimate development. We cannot help comparing these

workers with the leisurely students of the earlier times; the latter dreaming away their lives, rambling with indefinite purpose, stopping at all they see, in no haste to conclude, and often losing themselves in vagaries with a carelessness inimitable by art; the former beckoned onward by the ideal of completeness, scouring wide fields that they may lose nothing essential, yet ever coming back to the main track, untempted by pleasing sights or sounds foreign to their labors. A feverish unrest pervades all their life, and their ceaseless toil depresses us with a sense of fatigue. Like Kay in Andersen's exquisite tale, they all seem bound by the icy rule of the Snow-Queen, their hearts growing more and more chilly as they endeavor in vain to arrange the blocks of ice that shall spell the word Eternity.

It is evident that, with completeness in view, the limitations of our human existence impose limitations also to our study. To be perfect, one must be minute; he must press in his work at the sides, that it may have more intense force in its proper direction; for expansion does produce feebleness. If the whole Greek verb be too much for a life-time, it may perhaps suffice for the aorist tense. Thus, one choosing a single pin-point for his energy, another setting his mind over the course of some equally narrow line, the probability is increased that each will attain some final complete result. And it is by this minute subdivision of labor that so much has been effected.

But in the very perfection of this criticism lies the reason for its most signal failure; for in just this is critical scholarship at fault,—it takes from its devotees the power of grasping wholes. The analytical faculties become so disproportionately enlarged as to produce a corresponding loss in the constructive powers which see immediately their object. Is it not true of the Wolfian (or Wolfish, as some would have it) theory of Homer's partition, that it found its eager upholders instantly among an erudite class of scholars, who had so strained their eyes over the fine dust of the Iliad that they had lost, in a measure, the capacity of seeing at a glance the beautiful entirety of the poem? The arguments adduced were ingenious, and many of them unanswerable by a similar method,



but they were too *acute*; and a plain scholar, who could have no chance in a dispute with these men, might yet have a much clearer judgment than they upon the question at issue. It was no strange thing, that among such scholars the primary argument drawn from the *Iliad* itself should fare so hardly as it did; but Aristotle was right after all, and the argument is there, as plain as a pikestaff, only the scholars could not discern it because their eyes were so close to it.

It was, indeed, impossible that critical scholarship so intensely active should fail at last to emerge into rank scepticism. To be able not to see a thing, comes in fact to be with some the highest proof of the excellence of their powers of sight. To feel that one has the ability to judge is, as we have said, very likely to lead one into the habit of judging. It is a fine thing, we admit, to arraign a line in Hesiod upon the charge of obtaining credit on false pretences, to hear the evidence, to weigh it, and perhaps finally to condemn the line to be expunged from all future editions. We are not disputing the value of such judgments, we are but pointing out the subtle temptation to the judge of perpetually asserting his authority. Thus the arrogance of criticism leads to change, to rejection, to annihilation. The mind becomes morbidly active, and a hunger takes hold of the reasoning power, which constantly craves some new food; but it never is satisfied, because it is diseased.

It may seem a trivial opinion, but we are inclined to think the world much the debtor to antiquity for its agency in keeping these men out of mischief, and thus contributing to universal peace. The existence of this critical spirit is due to other causes than to the subjects on which it expends itself, and it must, therefore, assert itself in some way; and surely it were better for such lynx-eyes to be penetrating the mysteries of the Cabeiri, than to be peering with cold look into mysteries more sacred and more vital to us; better, if these sheriffs will not rest without a culprit, that some unfortunate wretch like Phalaris should satisfy them, than that they should all be upon the scent of one even so culpable as Chatterton, tracking him by his blood to his warm grave; better, if we must have a victim for the Moloch of our critical wrath, that we should

select some ancient as the sacrifice, than that we should choose a neighbor and a friend.

It is hard wholly to turn from the more morbid aspect of this phase of scholarship. It arrests our attention ; for it is painfully human. Tragic indeed is the interest which attaches to these solitary, restless spirits, vainly pushing on and on after perfection, and lying down at last, so many of them, with the cold mists of sceptical death gathering about them. Before, we looked upon a simple, nay, childish life, trustful even to foolish credulity. We thought it healthy, and so it is in its best state ; but its health is mere freedom from sickness. There is in this second phase of scholarship, in its best condition, an impetuous, nervous life, that throws off by its vigor all impurities. It is therefore better than the first, and, if it be more liable to fail, it has a larger promise of success. It represents an advance, and that an important one. Its scepticism cannot wholly destroy the faith of the former period, but only its debasing credulity. The scholar has given up his unconsciousness of self and his simple trustfulness, but he has gained larger power for the dominant intellect.

It would seem, at first glance, as if the scholarship thus far considered covered the whole ground of the investigation of antiquity, or at least that a combination of the two elements, criticism meeting curiosity half-way, would produce the highest development of scholarship. But what it lacked separately in its two former phases, no mere combination could supply ; for the want was a vital one. In just this does the scholarship we have considered fail, that it looks upon the antiquity which is the field of its research as something so inevitably past as to be dead. In one phase antiquity is regarded as some vast Herculaneum, where curiosity may hunt and fancy find play, but from which all life has departed ; in the other, it is, indeed, a human body, but good only as it may serve the anatomist's skill, or be galvanized into a ghostly life by the action of the battery of scholarship. The very method of approach by these scholars toward the objects of their curiosity or the subjects of their speculation denies life and assumes death ; they act and think as if there were an eternal barrier between the past and the present, and as if the world in entering upon its mod-

ern course — though they could not set their finger on the entering point — took leave of its ancient ways, and committed itself to new and totally different modes. In fine, they estrange themselves from the past which they study, by studying it solely as a past.

It seems a trite thing to say that the instinct of a common humanity shared with the ancients is the key that opens the door to the innermost treasure-house of antiquity; yet the very triteness of the declaration covers a profound truth. No one ever avowed the belief that the ancients were less human than ourselves, or attributed to them a different development in history; but really, and in a manner affecting the whole method of investigation, scholars have, time and again, treated the ancients as if they were Selenites, or as if the world of the nineteenth century before Christ were essentially different from the same world in the nineteenth century after Christ. They have treated men as performers upon a stage, they themselves living a real life; and thus they have drawn the life-blood out of antiquity, and presented us with cold images of a death simulating life. Through their labors, all the ancient modes of life seem so many non-conductors of sympathy. We approach the men and women themselves, whether of romance or of action, through such a thicket of scholastic lore, that we may be forgiven if we feel ourselves, when in their presence, shut out from the world we live in.

Surely, then, it is a progress in development of the last importance, when scholarship passes from a merely curious and critical investigation of antiquity, and enters upon a living phase, regarding the past not as past but as present, looking upon it as active, and so presenting it to others. It is, indeed, the immediate consequence of such scholarship, that it becomes the interpreter of the past, and the daysman between old and new civilization. It delights in discovering the real connection between things, despite the apparent contradiction of merely exterior differences. It breaks down the unessential barriers, and shows how the great fields of ancient and modern civilization are under one Master, who causes his sun and his rain to fructify each. It recognizes humanity under its most uncouth garb, and by this power annihilates time and space, and brings

alike old times and far countries into communion with the present and with its particular portion of the earth.

The power by which a scholar thus realizes to himself the ancient life, is a living sympathy with the present. It has been held necessary to seclude one's self from the present in order more completely to live in the past ; to put out of sight one's neighbors and friends, and, by aid of the imagination, to transport one's self to old times and far countries ; to fill the mind so completely with antique images, that the senses themselves shall conduct few new impressions to the brain, so that one thus living shall walk blindly through the crowded thoroughfares, and hear the voice of men as a distant hum. But if all realizing, humanizing aid of the present be rejected, what does such a life become but a pictured life ? And, upon its fair canvas, what are the active men and women who appear in the scenes, however brilliantly painted, but pictured men and women ? What are the philosophers holding discourse but marble statues, lifelike indeed in form, but cold as death in all spiritual existence ? Nay, it is through the present only that we live in the past, and this not by idly fancying old scenes to be re-enacted on new ground, but by making the vitality of the present to reinspire the past. What affects our mental organization more than the intensity of action about us, — the throbbing of a nation's heart, as witnessed in some grand movement of the popular will, — and, most, the humanizing influences that arise from the personal relations we hold ? If we shut ourselves from these, immured within walls of books, how do we rob ourselves of half our humanity, and thus of more than half the power to appreciate and reconstruct in ancient forms that same humanity, which, when it gave them shape, was as glowing as that about us ! As far as one despises the joy-giving element in life, so far does he stunt his own capacity for appreciating, much more for enjoying, the same element in represented life ; so far, too, as one closes his ears to the great questions of right and wrong, or of government, or of civil institutions, so far does he fail of understanding the significance of the same questions as they appear in ancient history.

The method by which one puts on record his own conception of this living past is not, as in the amusing classic stories

of Hawthorne, by trying to unite the old life with modern modes, but by such statement of the life common to old and new times as keeps mere modes subordinate ; nay, as shows how fitting each is to its own time, — a work which has been accomplished by Kingsley, and better by Cox. To a vivid representation poetry offers less difficulty than prose, since it depends so little upon local and temporal accidents for its power to move men, that even a critical or a curious scholar may unawares own his common humanity with the author by yielding to its influence. Scholars of every sort meet nearly upon common ground when they come upon philosophy, from its very nature ; but the greatest and most important difference is found in the manner of reading and interpreting history. The scenes and events which there touch the man beneath the scholar are allied to the poetic, and governed by the same rules ; but what remains, — the growth of nations, the varied expression of national character, systems of government, and all historic changes, — these come chiefly under the notice of the intellect, and here the vitiating element of apathy enters. They are often discussed as if they were the curious parts of some vast mechanism, or the results of the action of thought upon its wide range of material. Even if all these matters have been treated so exhaustively that further search seems almost useless ; if the treatment still lacks the vivifying element which reclothes them with their old life, we do not believe in them as we believe in what is going on around us. Niebuhr, in one of his Lectures, quotes the saying of some ingenious man, that “it is thought that at length people will come to read ancient history as if it had really happened.” And the same writer says, elsewhere : “We need not wonder that ancient history, on the whole, is regarded as if its events had never actually happened ; for it is commonly looked at without any attempt to understand it, and men judge of it by quite a different standard from that which is applied to modern history ; but even the latter is not understood as it should be. Hence . . . . the history of antiquity is divided into periods, without any regard to their differences ; the division, in fact, is made with the same uniformity with which the bodies of the universe are classified, and as if it were altogether for-

gotten that history is a living body." So let one read Arnold's Thucydides, and he will see how a man, who seemed to throw his whole energy into the present, could, with all the stronger reality, enter into the Peloponnesian war, and come back, as if he had taken part then in state affairs, to bring to his countrymen in England the result of his experience.

The same truth applies with urgent force to the reading of the Bible. This becomes in our hands a dead book, especially in the historical portions, when we suffer the feeling that the abyss of time forms an impassable gulf between it and us. It is one thing to assent to the historical truth of the biography of Moses, and quite another to treat Moses in our minds as if he were a man like ourselves. So much are we under the influence of an unreal way of treating the Bible, that we often detect ourselves and others in notions with regard to it in which reason has no part. The writer remembers his shock upon noticing lately in a city paper the report of a celebration by the resident Jews of the annual Feast of Purim, at which festival there was a masked ball, and Esther, Mordecai, Haman, and others appeared in character, and, if we are not mistaken, enacted the historical scenes celebrated. A second thought showed it as a commemoration of a great event in the history of their nation; and if the religious observance was wanting, it probably appeared no more strange to them than to us our neglect to open the churches on the Fourth of July. German rationalism is in part at least the fruit of an ignorant, superstitious use of the Bible, in which men feared to think that the personages mentioned in it had any such life of their own as they themselves had, and imputed to them an indefinable sanctity. Much, very much, do we owe to the critical scholarship that set us free from the debasing credulity of curious scholarship, which might have been reverence once, but was fast becoming dead superstition. And much more should we arrest by a living scholarship the efforts of that same criticism, also rushing to its extreme of scepticism.

A vitalizing of scholarship, such as takes place when a generation of scholars pass from critical or curious habits to those of warmer and more vivid character, is most likely to occur in connection with violent, or at least powerful, changes

in political, moral, and social organizations. Thus we find that, upon the whole, the present century is the most important period of this phase of scholarship. When humanity receives such a shock as the French Revolution caused, the most absent scholar is called back to the world, and all minds that have any sympathy with their kind busy themselves with the problems which events are proposing. Out of this alliance of scholarship with life comes forth the glorious form which we have seen. The world and the college of scholars know each other's faces, and work side by side. Thus also we find that the scholarship of England in the Elizabethan era was of a vivid phase. It followed curious scholarship, and therefore was less severely accurate; but it has given us at least some of the noblest translations and the most acute observations.

It is, we trust, with no foolish national vainglory, but with heart-felt wish and strong hope, that we look to America for the finest consummation of this phase of scholarship. In that Declaration of Independence which we so noisily celebrate, we did not specify the more important independence of thought which we have it in our power to possess. We showed it, indeed, in the severance, and in the provokingly new way in which we have since gone on, just the contrary in deed and manner to what was predicted. But in separating from the mother country, and in subsequent declarations of our new-world sovereignty, we did not cut ourselves off from parental experience and old-world customs; we renounced no right to history, while resolving to combine the old forms anew, and to inspire them with fresh vitality. So in scholarship, we may take all the labors of those who have gone before us, and give to them our Western life. The emigrant who leaves older countries comes hither that he may work unrestrained by the toils which a long civilization has wound about him. Scholarship is not so bound; but it has its own restrictions, and from these we may set it free. Old formulas and traditional precepts we may sweep away, if they do but hinder the real life. If the presence of a free, quick national existence can elevate the scholarly mind and ennoble its pursuits, that presence is with us, and its fruits will surely appear. To-day the young scholar of America is, it may be, in the trenches of Virginia,

or penning words of fire for the press, or speaking to churches filled with souls whose thoughts fly, while he speaks, far away to sterner scenes. Wherever he be, even if in his quiet study, he cannot be blind or deaf to the surging life of his countrymen. Quiet must come at last, and with it new toils, and those of thought, for the sword cannot forever be the arbiter of our destinies, — if it cuts Gordian knots, yet new complications must appear not thus to be solved. What is there of worth in ancient life, literature, or history? O scholar! who readeest it with thine ears open to questions asked by every thoughtful American, bring it to the light that all may see. We want the old lives that have been lived; the true words that have been spoken; the warnings of tried ways. These are the legacy of antiquity, and to thee, O scholar! belongs the trust.

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ART. IV. — *Memoirs of Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds.* By CHARLES MACKAY, LL. D. London: G. Routledge & Co. 1856.

PORSON, a close observer of men as well as a sound Greek critic, once jestingly remarked, that he would some time write the history of human folly in five hundred volumes. Our author has given us but two volumes on this prolific subject, commencing with the “Mississippi Scheme” of John Law, which turned the head of all France, and ending with a chapter on the insane admirers of relics, — “men who have made fools of themselves for the jaw-bone of a saint, the toe-nail of an apostle, the handkerchief a king blew his nose in, or the rope that hanged a criminal.” We shall not follow Mr. Mackay in his interesting discussion of the extraordinary delusions of the race in earlier times; but we propose rather to speak of the popular fallacies which, notwithstanding our vaunted progress, still bewilder the mind and conscience of the people. Out of the many which readily occur, we shall touch upon five; selecting them not because they are the most